

Getting Started in Mexico? Why You Should Try Ancestry.com

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Objective: Provide information about content, strategies and tips for researching ancestors from Mexico in key record collections available on Ancestry.com.

Border Crossings

If your Mexican ancestor came to the U.S. between 1908 and 1964, try using border crossing records to determine his town of origin. Some information can be found for the years 1895-1964, but the best records begin in 1908. They are not complete. There are various types of forms. Always look for the long form or manifest because it contains more information.

1. Begin on Ancestry.com
2. Click on Search
3. In the drop-down menu, click on Immigration & Travel
4. Under Narrow by Category, click on Border Crossings & Passports
5. Under Featured Data Collections, click on Border Crossings: From Mexico to U.S., 1895-1964

Key information

- Name, age, and marital status
- Birthplace
- Physical description
- Last permanent residence
- Destination
- Persons accompanying the alien
- Name and address of nearest relative or friend in Mexico
- Ever been in the U.S. before? If so, when and where?

Search strategies and tips

- **Always** view the original image for an indexed record.
- Once you find a family member crossing the border, search again for everyone who crossed the border on the same day in the same place. Using the exact date and place feature, you may find additional family members.
- There may be more than one record of a crossing. Always look for the long form or manifest.
- They may have crossed the border multiple times.
- Learn more by watching the online class “Crossing the Frontera” found in the Help Center on FamilySearch.org.

1930 Census

Nationwide census taken on May 15. Covers about 78% of the population. The entire Federal District as well as some other localities are missing. Completely indexed on both Ancestry and FamilySearch.

Key information

- Name, age, sex
- Marital status
 - Single
 - Married civilly
 - Married by the Church
 - *Unión libre* (common law union)
 - Widowed
 - Divorced
- Birth state
- Names of other household members and neighbors

Search strategies and tips

- **Always** view the original image for an indexed record.
- Women do not use their married name
- Search for every member of the family
- Search the FamilySearch catalog by place to determine if your ancestor's town is included

Note: Ancestry.mx is the Spanish language version and will be used for demonstrating the following record types.

Civil Registration

Government records of births, marriages and deaths ranging from 1857-1987 on Ancestry. FamilySearch may have some more recent unindexed records. Date ranges vary by state. Ancestry indexed births to 1947, marriages to 1967, and deaths to 1987.

Key information

Births

- Name of child
- Date and place of birth
- Names of parents and possibly grandparents
- Place of residence and origin of parents and grandparents
- Names of witnesses

Marriages

- Names of bride and groom
- Ages of bride and groom
- Names of any previous spouses
- Names of parents
- Place of birth and residence of bride and groom
- Place of birth and residence of parents
- Type of document: *Presentación* or *matrimonio*?

Deaths

- Name of deceased
- Date and place of death
- Marital status
- Place of birth
- Names of parents
- Name of spouse
- If the deceased left a will
- Names of heirs

Search strategies and tips

- **Always** view the original image for an indexed record.
- Check for both marriage records – *presentación* and the *matrimonio*
- Try a search using only the names of the parents
- Less is more. Don't add so much information in the search fields that your focus is too narrow.
- Most records are indexed only by the paternal surname.
- Search the FamilySearch catalog by place to determine which records are available along with date ranges.
- Compare information found with that in church records, when available.

Catholic Church Records

Records of baptisms, marriages and deaths created by the Catholic Church, the predominant religion in Mexico.

Locating images on Ancestry

1. Before you begin, write down the date and the place of the record or open a new browser window to begin your search
2. Pay attention to the record type – baptism, marriage, death
3. Click on Search or *Buscar*.
4. Click on Card Catalog or *catálogo de tarjetas*.
5. Search by Keywords or *Palabra(s) Clave* for the name of the state followed by the words Catholic Church Records.
6. Click on Search or *Buscar*.
7. On the results page, click on the collection that includes the name of the state you're looking for followed by the words, Catholic Church Records.
8. On the right side of the page click on the drop-down menu below the word City or Ciudad and select the town where the record was from.
9. On the drop-down menu below the word Parish or Parroquia, select the parish.
10. On the drop-down menu below the word Record type and year, select the collection that corresponds to the record you found.
11. The first image in the record set will be the film number and will correspond to the film number cited in the indexed information.

Key information

Baptisms

- Name of the child
- Baptism and/or birth date
- Names of the parents
- Place of origin and/or residence of parents
- Names of grandparents
- Place of origin and/or residence of grandparents
- Names of the godparents
- Search strategies and tips

Marriages and informaciones matrimoniales

- Names of the bride and groom
- Marriage date
- Place of origin and/or residence of bride and groom
- Names of any previous spouses
- Names of parents and their place of origin and/or residence
- Names of witnesses

Deaths / burials

- Name and age of deceased
- Death date
- Burial date and place
- Names of parents, if a child
- Name of spouse, if married
- Possibly names of heirs
- If the deceased left a will

Search strategies and tips

- **Always** view the original image for an indexed record.
- Try a search using only the names of the parents.
- Less is more. Don't add so much information in the search fields that your focus is too narrow.
- Most records are indexed only by the paternal surname.
- Search the FamilySearch catalog by place to determine which records might have been indexed.
- Compare information found with that in civil registration records, when available.